

REMARKS

This is a response to the Office Action mailed on May 25, 2007, in this application. Claims 1-8 are presented for examination. The specification has been amended as required by the Examiner. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Objections to the Specification

The specification was objected to because the Abstract needs to be on a separate sheet of paper. The Abstract is presented on a separate sheet of paper herewith.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sano (US 5,664,763) in view of Kipnes (US 3,525,973) and Nonaka (US 5,328,273).

Claim 1 recites:

1. An optical fiber unit installation apparatus comprising:
an optical fiber unit supplier;
a blowing head having an entrance into which an optical fiber unit supplied from the optical fiber unit supplier is introduced, and an exit communicated with the entrance and combined with an installation tube for air pressure installation;
a pressing unit for applying air pressure to the optical fiber unit introduced into the blowing head so that the optical fiber unit is inserted into the installation tube; and
a fiber sealing unit which is an aggregation of fur-type elastic fibers mounted in an advancing path of the optical fiber unit through the blowing head, the fiber sealing unit preventing leakage of fluid by surrounding the inserted optical fiber unit so that fiber ends thereof are contacted with the optical fiber unit.

(Emphasis added.)

The Examiner asserted that Sano discloses the claimed invention except for the fiber sealing unit, and cited Kipnes and Nonaka to remedy this admitted deficiency.

Kipnes discloses an electrical connector comprising a sleeve 39 made of Teflon or similar material. The sleeve is clearly of solid construction, not being made of anything resembling the “aggregation of fur-type elastic fibers” claimed in claim 1. Further, sleeve 39 of Kipnes is in “engagement” with pin 18, which it surrounds (see Kipnes, col. 4, line 56) and, due to its “resiliency,” upon the assembly of the two parts of the connector, when it

becomes “engaged” with pin 18, presses outward against prongs 37, thereby achieving “firm engagement” of the two components of the connector. (*Id.*, col. 4 line 73-col. 5 line 4.) Such a sleeve could not be applied to the optical fiber unit installation apparatus of claim 1, because, being solid and in firm engagement with that which it surrounds, would not allow the fiber to pass through.

Nonaka discloses a liner for a spherical bearing, one component of which, namely inner layer 2a, is a sheet of woven fabric made of, for example, Teflon. However, in contrast to a sheet of woven fabric, claim 1 requires “an aggregation of fur-type elastic fibers.”

Also, the part of inner layer 2a that is in contact with another component of the device is the surface of the fabric comprising inner layer 2a. In contrast, claim 1 requires that the “fiber ends” of the fiber sealing unit be in contact with the optical fiber unit. The meaning of this limitation is quite clear from the example embodiments illustrated in Figs. 4 and 5 of the present application. Another difference is that inner layer 2a has the configuration of a portion of a spherical surface, and thus would be unable to “surround” the optical fiber and prevent leakage of fluid, as required by claim 1.

Thus, neither Kipnes nor Nonaka, alone or in combination, disclose, teach, or suggest the fiber sealing unit of claim 1, and nothing disclosed, taught, or suggested by Kipnes or Nonaka, alone or in combination, if combined with the apparatus of Sano, would produce the optical fiber unit installation apparatus claimed in claim 1.

Further, the Kipnes and Nonaka references are from the nonanalogous arts of, respectively, electrical connectors and bearings.

Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 based on these references should be withdrawn. Because claims 2-8 are dependent claims depending from claim 1, the rejections of these claims should also be withdrawn, for at least this reason.

The Examiner also asserted that Baker (6,364,290) discloses the claimed invention except for the fiber sealing unit, and that Rivard (US 6,402,123) similarly discloses the claimed invention except for the fiber sealing unit. In each case, the Examiner offered Kipnes and Nonaka to remedy the admitted deficiencies of, respectively, Baker and Rivard. However, for the same reasons given above, neither Kipnes nor Nonaka, alone or in combination, disclose, teach, or suggest the fiber sealing unit of claim 1, nor does any combination of anything disclosed in any of these references produce the optical fiber installation unit claimed in claim 1. Accordingly, the rejections of claim 1 and dependent claims 2-8 based on these references should also be withdrawn.

Conclusion

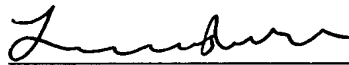
In view of the above, applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. A favorable disposition to that effect is respectfully requested.

No fee is believed to be due for this submission. Please charge any fee that may be due or credit any overpayment to Jones Day Deposit Account No. 50-3013.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments concerning this submission, he is invited to call the undersigned at the phone number listed below.

Date: August 23, 2007

Respectfully submitted,



For Yeah-Sil Moon (Reg. No. 52,042)

By Lawrence R. Gabuzda (Reg. No. 51,711)

JONES DAY

222 East 41st Street

New York, New York 10017

(212) 326-3939